



# Schools are the Heart of Our Community

**COVID-19** is still with us and we're learning new things about the virus every day. **We must take the most preventative actions to protect students, educators, and our communities during this pandemic.**

## **Community health is the first step toward COVID-19 safety in our schools.**

Low infection rates, low community transmission, and high public health capacity for rapid testing, contact tracing, and isolation support are essential pre-requisites for bringing people together in our school buildings.

### Core Principles



**Ensure the Health and Safety of  
Students and Staff**

**Include Educators in the  
Decision**

**Provide Equitable & Effective  
Teaching & Learning**

**Well-Funded Public Schools  
and Colleges**

### Layer prevention strategies in schools.

1. **Lower Contacts:** Reduce the number of different people with whom students and staff members interact. Utilize strategies such as small class sizes, stable cohorts, and virtual meetings.
2. **Six Feet Distance:** Establish transportation, campus, and classroom environments that maintain at least six feet of physical distance.
3. **Good Ventilation:** Increase outdoor air and ensure HVAC systems operate properly. Important strategies include maximum fresh air changes, effective ventilation rates, MERV-13 or higher filters, CO2 sensors, GUV, and portable HEPA air cleaners in every classroom.
4. **Regular Testing:** Surveillance testing identifies asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic individuals with the virus, allowing them to isolate earlier and reduce opportunities for transmission at school. Rapid testing and tracing are also needed in response to cases at school.
5. **Face Coverings and Personal Protective Equipment:** Ensure an ample supply of effective equipment and training.
6. **Handwashing:** Provide plenty of well-stocked handwashing stations and hand sanitizer throughout the school. Build time into the day for frequent handwashing.
7. **Surface Cleaning & Disinfecting:** Use the safest and most effective products in daily surface cleaning, including floors.
8. **Symptom Screening:** Conduct daily symptom screening. Symptomatic people, those who test positive, and those exposed to someone COVID-19 positive should stay home.
9. **Protection for Those at Greater Risk:** Provide accommodations for students and staff at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 or who have family members at higher risk.
10. **Effective Program Implementation & Monitoring:** Assign a trained person at each site to implement and monitor the COVID-19 prevention program each day, fixing problems when they arise.



For more information visit  
[CTA.org/for-educators/covid19](https://CTA.org/for-educators/covid19)

# Take Action

- Organize members
- Meet with and survey members & parents
- Build coalitions with other local unions, parents & community
- Meet with local health department and local elected officials
- Collectively bargaining & enforce the contract and safety language
- Train chapter leaders & union site reps
- Educate members about reasonable accommodation and leave rights

## By Law, Your District's COVID-19 Prevention Program must include

1. Name of the person responsible for implementing and maintaining the program.
2. Support to ensure that safety practices are followed.
3. Clear communication plan, including encouraging staff to report COVID-19 hazardous situations without fear of reprisal.
4. Procedure to monitor, inspect, and identify unsafe COVID-19 conditions at sites.
5. Process to ensure health officials rapidly investigate, test and trace cases and contacts.
6. A list of prevention measures and a plan to implement them and fix unsafe conditions in a timely manner.
7. Training on COVID-19 transmission, best safety measures, and the employer's prevention program.
8. Access to the written plan for staff and union representatives.

For more information: [Cal-OSHA Injury and Illness Prevention Program \(IIPP\), CCR Title 8 Section 3203.](#)

## Talk with Your Local Public Health Officer & Elected Officials

Organize a group of union leaders, members, and parents to meet with your local health department and elected officials to discuss:

- Data on new case rates, test positivity rates, hospitalizations, deaths, outbreaks, and community spread.
- Response capacity and a designated health team to rapidly test and contact trace cases and outbreaks in schools.
- A transparent notification plan about cases and outbreaks to the school community.
- Protocols for class and school closure triggers, isolation and quarantine, and isolation support programs.
- Regular testing (surveillance testing) to identify asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic cases for early isolation, provide early warning of a school outbreak, and evaluate safety measures.

For more information, [see materials from our Science & The Law Webinars.](#)